

Document A: World History Textbook

Like the Portuguese, the Belgians had never really considered preparing Africans in the huge Congo for self-government, much less for independence. As a Congolese nationalist movement emerged after World War II, however, the Belgian government agreed that it should prepare the colony for self-government. Believing that the Congolese had not developed the institutions or acquired the experience needed to manage a modern state, Belgians supported a 30-year timetable to prepare them for independence. Distrusting the Belgians, **African nationalists** demanded immediate self-government. Consequently, in 1960 Belgium suddenly announced that it would withdraw completely within a year.

With little preparation, many political parties representing different ethnic groups, geographical regions and political beliefs participated in the first elections ever held in the new Democratic Republic of the Congo. Former postal clerk Patrice Lumumba became prime minister, while his rival and political enemy Joseph Kasavubu became president. Lumumba remained opposed to European influence. Angered by his stance, Belgian technicians and experts left the Congo in **droves**. This proved to be a major blow to the new country's economy.

Soon, the army **mutinied** and the copper-rich province of Katanga **seceded**. The country was plunged into a crisis. An assassin killed Lumumba in 1961, and Kasavubu assumed full power. The chaos and violence continued.

Source: World History: Continuity and Change. *Austin, Texas: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1999, pp. 776-777.*

Vocabulary

African nationalists: people who support African self-rule and unity

droves: large groups or numbers

mutiny: refuse to follow orders

secede: withdraw from being part of a country

Document B: Lumumba's Independence Day Speech

The Congo celebrated its independence from Belgium on June 30, 1960, with a ceremony including speeches by the King of Belgium and the new president of the Congo, Joseph Kasavubu. Lumumba was not scheduled to speak at the ceremony, but he took the podium after listening to Kasavubu and gave the following speech.

Although this independence of the Congo is being proclaimed today by agreement with Belgium, an **amicable** country, with which we are on equal terms, no Congolese will ever forget that independence was won in struggle, a persevering and inspired struggle carried on from day to day. We are deeply proud of our struggle, because it was just and noble and **indispensable** in putting an end to the humiliating **bondage** forced upon us.

We have experienced forced labor in exchange for pay that did not allow us to satisfy our hunger, to clothe ourselves, to have decent lodgings or to bring up our children as dearly loved ones. Morning, noon and night we were subjected to jeers, insults and blows because we were "Negroes." . . . We have not forgotten that the law was never the same for the white and the black, that it was **lenient** to the ones, and cruel and inhuman to the others. We have not forgotten that in the cities the mansions were for the whites and the **tumbledown** huts for the blacks. . . .

All that, my brothers, brought us untold suffering. But . . . we tell you that henceforth all that is finished with. The Republic of the Congo has been proclaimed and our beloved country's future is now in the hands of its own people.

Source: *Lumumba's Independence Day Speech, June 30, 1960.*

Vocabulary

amicable: friendly

indispensable: completely necessary

bondage: slavery

lenient: forgiving, tolerant

tumbledown: run-down

Document C: Central Intelligence Agency Daily Brief

The American Central Intelligence Agency issued the following statement on June 27, 1960, as part of a daily briefing about countries in “the Communist Bloc.” The document was classified as Top Secret.

Lumumba Moves to Consolidate Power in the Congo: The government formed by Congo **Premier-designate** Patrice Lumumba is “weak” and has a “strong leftist **tinge**” according to the consulate general in **Leopoldville**. Members of opposition parties named to the cabinet are described as little known and likely to be dominated by Lumumba. Lumumba **allocated** to himself the key post of defense minister, which carries with it control over the Congo’s 24,000-man security force, whose Belgian officers are expected to remain after the Congo’s independence on 30 June.

Among ten secretaries of state, however, five—including secretary for economic coordination and planning—are Communist inclined. Anti-Lumumba leaders continue to emphasize Lumumba’s Communist contacts, and in conversation with US officials have **deplored** the failure of the United States to check “Communist forces” in the Congo. Available evidence suggests that Lumumba is a leftist-oriented “neutralist” who has accepted financial aid from Communist sources.

Source: CIA Daily Brief. June 27, 1960.

Vocabulary

<u>Premier-designate</u> : elected Prime Minister	<u>allocated</u> : gave
<u>tinge</u> : a slight trace	<u>deplored</u> : strongly disapproved, dreaded
<u>Leopoldville</u> : the capital city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo	

Document D: New York Times

On July 11, 1960, the state of Katanga declared its independence from the newly independent Congo. Katanga is rich in copper, gold, and uranium and had Belgium's support. Lumumba knew that losing Katanga would be a huge blow to the Congo, and he asked the U.N. to intervene. The U.N. told Belgium to remove its army from Katanga and sent U.N. troops to the Congo, but it didn't let the troops help Lumumba attack Katangese and Belgian forces. This article appeared in the New York Times on August 6, 1960.

Premier Patrice Lumumba of the Congo telegraphed Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld today. . . . Mr. Lumumba accused the Belgian government of "provoking" the secession of Katanga and maintaining troops there "to consolidate" this action. He said the moves of the **dissident** premier of Katanga, Moise Tshombe, were "dictated" by his Belgian military advisers.

After disclosing the text of the telegram to Mr. Hammarskjöld, Mr. Lumumba added that he firmly approved of his Government's decision to force the Belgian Ambassador to leave the Congo by Monday. He said his Government had taken the decision to break off all relations with Belgium on July 14. He said the decision . . . was taken after Belgium's "**flagrant** violation of the friendship treaty by **instigation** of the secession of Katanga."

Source: Thomas F. Brady. "Congolese Premier Threatens to 'Revise Position' Unless U.N. Sends Troops Now." The New York Times, August 6, 1960.

Vocabulary

dissident: someone who opposes government policy

flagrant: shameless

instigation: the act of beginning or initiating an event or action

Document E: Belgian Commission Report

A committee to investigate the possible involvement of Belgium in the assassination of Lumumba was formed in 1999. The committee produced a 20-page report in 2001 and concluded that Belgium was “morally responsible for the circumstances leading to the death of Lumumba.”

The different speeches of 30 June 1960 confirmed the mutual distrust between Lumumba and the Belgian government, which undoubtedly influenced their reactions to the **subsequent** events. From the beginning of the crisis, it was clear that it led to a fundamental split between Lumumba and the Belgian government and that gradually, not only the Belgian government, but also many other governments and many layers of Belgian and Congolese society were campaigning . . . to bring about Lumumba’s downfall politically.

As indicated, the Belgian government found itself pressured by public opinion which was very harshly opposed to the events in the Congo after independence. . . . It was hard for the government to justify a **laissez-faire** attitude regarding the tens of thousands of Europeans in the Congo and it was also worried about the financial and economic losses the Congo crisis could cause. The stakes were high for the Belgian financial groups in the Congo. Repeatedly, this was brought to the attention of the government.

Source: “*The Conclusions of the Enquiry Committee*,” 2001.

Vocabulary

subsequent: following, coming after

laissez-faire: hands off, letting things take their own course

Lumumba Assassination Guiding Questions

Document A: Textbook

- 1) How does the textbook portray Lumumba and his leadership in the Congo?

- 2) Who, according to this document, assassinated Lumumba? Why was he assassinated?

- 3) Do you think this is a trustworthy document? Explain your reasoning.

Document B: Lumumba Speech

- 1) (Sourcing) Who gave this speech? When?

- 2) (Close reading) How does Lumumba describe Belgian colonialism in his speech?

How do you think this made Belgian listeners in the audience feel?

How do you think it made Congolese listeners feel?

- 3) (Close Reading) What clues does this speech provide about why Lumumba might have been assassinated?

Document C: CIA Daily Brief

- 1) (Sourcing/Contextualization) When did the CIA write this brief? What was going on in the U.S. at this time?
- 2) (Close Reading) How does this document describe Lumumba?
- 3) What clues does this document provide about why Lumumba might have been assassinated?

Document D: *New York Times* article

- 1) (Sourcing) Who wrote this article? Do you think it is a trustworthy source?
- 2) (Close Reading) According to this article, what claims did Lumumba make about Belgian involvement in Katanga's attempt to secede from the Congo?

- 3) (Contextualization) Why might Belgium support Katanga's desire to secede from the Congo?

- 4) What clues does this article provide about why Lumumba might have been assassinated?

Document E: Belgian Commission Report

- 1) (Sourcing) Who wrote this document? When and why was it written?

- 2) (Close Reading) What, according to this document, was the Belgian government most interested in protecting in the Congo?

- 3) What clues does this report provide about why Lumumba might have been assassinated?

- 4) Do you think this is a trustworthy source? Explain your reasoning.

Document	What reasons does this document suggest for why Lumumba was assassinated ?	What about this document makes it strong evidence?	What about this document makes it weak evidence?
B: Lumumba's Independence Day Speech			
C: CIA Daily Brief			
D: <i>New York Times</i>			
E: Belgian Commission Report			

Final Claim: Using arguments and evidence from Documents A-E, make a final claim to answer the question: *Why was Patrice Lumumba assassinated?*